

Jennifer H. Schnakenberg
6346 Crombie Street
Pittsburgh, Pa 15217-2511

August 30, 1999

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Dr. Jane E. Henney, Commissioner
Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Room 14-71
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Dr. Henney:

I am writing to express my concern over the excessive use of antibiotics by factory farms in the United States. This unnecessary drug use threatens public health:

- by promoting the evolution bacteria resistant to the same drugs used to treat human infections,
- by exposing people to these bacteria in the food they eat and the water they drink,
- and by simultaneously rendering useless the drugs used to treat people thus exposed.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have already expressed concern about the 16 million pounds of antibiotics used every year simply to promote faster growth and to compensate for unhygienic conditions on factory farms. I urge the FDA to follow the European Union's lead and ban the use of antibiotics to promote livestock growth, particularly the indiscriminate addition of these drugs to animal feed.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Schnakenberg
Pittsburgh, Pa

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FDA Commissioner
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